97-84097-28

Labour Party
(Great Britain)

What the labour
government has done

London

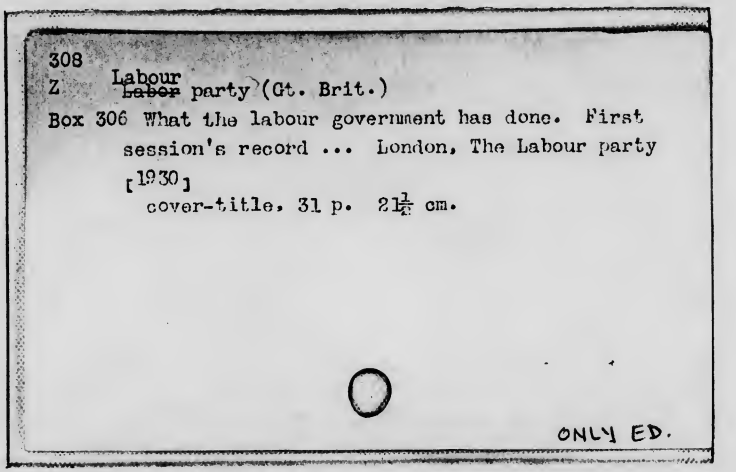
[1930]

97-84097-28
MASTER NEGATIVE #

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
PRESERVATION DIVISION

BIBLIOGRAPHIC MICROFORM TARGET

ORIGINAL MATERIAL AS FILMED - EXISTING BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD


308
Z Labour ~~Labor~~ party (Gt. Brit.)
Box 306 What the labour government has done. First session's record ... London, The Labour party [1930]
cover-title, 31 p. 21½ cm.
ONLY ED.

RESTRICTIONS ON USE: Reproductions may not be made without permission from Columbia University Libraries.

TECHNICAL MICROFORM DATA

FILM SIZE: 35mm REDUCTION RATIO: 9:1 IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA (IIA) IB IIB

DATE FILMED: 5-23-97 INITIALS: PB

TRACKING # : 24168

FILMED BY PRESERVATION RESOURCES, BETHLEHEM, PA.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC IRREGULARITIES

MAIN ENTRY: Labour Party (Great Britain)

What the labour government has done

Bibliographic Irregularities in the Original Document:

List all volumes and pages affected; include name of institution if filming borrowed text.

_____Page(s) missing/not available:_____

_____Volume(s) missing/not available:_____

__X__Illegible and/or damaged page(s): front and back cover

_____

_____Page(s) or volume(s) misnumbered:_____

_____Bound out of sequence:_____

_____Page(s) or volume(s) filmed from copy borrowed from:_____

_____

_____Other:_____

_____

_____Inserted material:_____

TRACKING#: MSH24168

WHAT THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT HAS DONE

First Session's Record

One Penny

308
Z
Box 306

Published by
THE LABOUR PARTY
Transport House, Smith Square, London, S.W.1

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction	1
Unemployment Measures	3
Widows' Pensions	7
Foreign Affairs	7
Coal Industry Reorganisation	10
Attack on Town and Country Slums	13
Transport and Electricity	15
Help for Agriculture	18
Land Drainage Act	21
Education	21
Mr. Snowden's Budget	24
The Depressed Industries	24
British Trade Abroad	25
Great War Pensions	27
Afforestation	29
More Enlightened Mental Treatment	29
Consumers' Council Bill	30
Help for Scottish Industries	30

INTRODUCTION

THE record of the Labour Government during its first Session must be judged by two tests:

The aims set forth, and the promises given, in the Election Manifesto of the Labour Party.

The position and strength of the Government in relation to the general Parliamentary situation.

So far as the first test is concerned, a comparison of the Manifesto and the achievements summarised in the following pages will show that even in one Session remarkable progress has been made towards the realisation of a programme which envisaged the tasks of a full period of Government with majority powers.

With regard to the second test it is sufficient to point out that this progress has been accomplished by a Minority Government which has sometimes had to accept a compromise to gain what was possible under the circumstances, as an alternative to still greater loss.

In the busy pre-occupations of the strenuous days of the Session even members of the party found it difficult to realise how much was actually being accomplished. Only when it was possible to study the record as a whole—not only legislation but important administrative work in the various departments—could its full scope and significance be perceived, especially in relation to the opposition and obstruction encountered in both Houses.

LEGISLATION AND FOREIGN POLICY

A solid foundation for future building has been laid.

The first practical steps have been taken towards the reorganisation and control of the coal industry in the national interest.

Road transport services will be regulated to meet both local and national needs.

The new powers and financial assistance given to local authorities makes possible a thorough-going clearance of slums and rehousing.

Miners' hours have been reduced.

Widows excluded from the Act of 1925 have been brought within the pensions scheme.

The position of Gt. Britain in international affairs has been transformed, and British statesmen are once more leading the movement for disarmament and world peace.

UNEMPLOYMENT

The full measure of the work for the unemployed has not been realised because of the devastating effects of the world trade slump, which has affected other countries, especially the United States and Germany, as seriously as if not more seriously than this country.

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction	1
Unemployment Measures	3
Widows' Pensions	7
Foreign Affairs	7
Coal Industry Reorganisation	10
Attack on Town and Country Slums	13
Transport and Electricity	15
Help for Agriculture	18
Land Drainage Act	21
Education	22
Mr. Snowden's Budget	24
The Depressed Industries	24
British Trade Abroad	25
Great War Pensions	27
Afforestation	29
More Enlightened Mental Treatment	29
Consumers' Council Bill	30
Help for Scottish Industries	30

Tory. Pam. 1931 DA/HEC

304.2 B64 m6

INTRODUCTION

THE record of the Labour Government during its first Session must be judged by two tests:

The aims set forth, and the promises given, in the Election Manifesto of the Labour Party.

The position and strength of the Government in relation to the general Parliamentary situation.

So far as the first test is concerned, a comparison of the Manifesto and the achievements summarised in the following pages will show that even in one Session remarkable progress has been made towards the realisation of a programme which envisaged the tasks of a full period of Government with majority powers.

With regard to the second test it is sufficient to point out that this progress has been accomplished by a Minority Government which has sometimes had to accept a compromise to gain what was possible under the circumstances, as an alternative to still greater loss.

In the busy pre-occupations of the strenuous days of the Session even members of the party found it difficult to realise how much was actually being accomplished. Only when it was possible to study the record as a whole—not only legislation but important administrative work in the various departments—could its full scope and significance be perceived, especially in relation to the opposition and obstruction encountered in both Houses.

LEGISLATION AND FOREIGN POLICY

A solid foundation for future building has been laid.

The first practical steps have been taken towards the reorganisation and control of the coal industry in the national interest.

Road transport services will be regulated to meet both local and national needs.

The new powers and financial assistance given to local authorities makes possible a thorough-going clearance of slums and rehousing.

Miners' hours have been reduced.

Widows excluded from the Act of 1925 have been brought within the pensions scheme.

The position of Gt. Britain in international affairs has been transformed, and British statesmen are once more leading the movement for disarmament and world peace.

UNEMPLOYMENT

The full measure of the work for the unemployed has not been realised because of the devastating effects of the world trade slump, which has affected other countries, especially the United States and Germany, as seriously as if not more seriously than this country.

The rise in the number of unemployed owing to this cause has obscured the fact that the Government has stimulated schemes of work, by grants or financial guarantees, up to the end of September, 1930, on which a total expenditure of £135,000,000 will be necessary.

The full significance of this effort will be realised from the contrast, indicated in a later page, with the helpless policy of drift of the last Government.

FUTURE TASKS

On the foundation thus laid the Labour Government has planned to proceed with its constructive work.

It is intended to carry out a great scheme of land settlement, in conjunction with measures to improve the efficiency of marketing, and to provide for the farmers, smallholders, and employed land workers a greater share of the proceeds of their labour.

The chaos of the London passenger services will be abolished by co-ordination under public ownership, combined with efficient management.

The postponed measure to raise the school-leaving age to 15 has been reintroduced.

A measure to protect consumers from profiteering in the necessaries of life has been reintroduced and will be pressed through Parliament.

A measure to restore to the Trade Unions the rights filched from them by the Tory Government in 1926 will be pressed forward, and other important matters will be dealt with as Parliamentary time permits.

In the sections that follow, the outstanding legislation and administrative work of the first Session are broadly reviewed.

[The facts and figures in the following pages cover the period up to September 30, 1930.]

UNEMPLOYMENT MEASURES

EFFECT OF THE WORLD DEPRESSION

THE Government concentrated attention on the problem of Unemployment immediately after taking office. Mr. J. H. Thomas was appointed Lord Privy Seal so that he might devote himself specially to the task. Two Acts were passed without delay—the Development (Loan Guarantees and Grants) Act of 1929, and the Colonial Development Act of 1929.

These provided for a two-fold policy—long-term measures to improve the efficiency of various public services and create conditions under which a general revival in trade, particularly in the depressed exporting industries, might be accelerated; and short-term measures, covering a larger variety of smaller schemes, to be carried out mainly by local authorities, to provide new employment as speedily as possible.

The general principle is laid down, however, that all schemes in the second category must be justified on the ground that they would have been initiated sooner or later, and that they would serve a useful and constructive purpose. There was to be no more digging of holes and filling them up again.

FIRST MEASURES

An Advisory Committee was set up to deal with applications from statutory bodies such as railway, dock, harbour, canal, electricity, gas and water companies, for assistance under the Development Act; while schemes of local authorities and other bodies not trading for profit, relating to electricity, gas, water, sewage, civic buildings, parks, reclamation and docks, were referred to the Unemployment Grants Committee, which was placed for the first time on a statutory basis.

Small committees were appointed to inquire into the conditions of the cotton, steel and fisheries industries, and proposals to start the coal industry on the way to reorganisation were embodied in the Coal Mines Act.

Intense activity was quickly aroused, and applications in respect of a great variety of undertakings began to flow to the Advisory Committee set up to deal with development schemes submitted by statutory bodies, and to the Unemployment Grants Committee.

Meanwhile the world trade slump developed, gradually at first and much more rapidly in the early months of 1930. This occurred just as employment was beginning to be created on a steadily increasing scale, in connection with the short-term schemes. The inevitable consequence was that the effect was completely obscured as the unemployment figures mounted rapidly week by week.

ADAPTATION OF POLICY

The policy of the Government was adapted to these entirely new circumstances. Upon the appointment of Mr. Thomas to the office of

Dominions Secretary a Committee of the Cabinet was set up, with the Prime Minister as Chairman, to deal especially with Unemployment questions. It was decided that while the promotion of long-term measures for trade revival must continue to be pressed forward, the new conditions demanded the most energetic action to create the greatest possible amount of employment in the winter of 1930–1.

A conference of representatives of local authorities was convened at the Guildhall, London, in the early part of July, 1930, to discuss the possibility both of speeding up schemes of work already approved and of expanding the programme. A few days afterwards it was announced on behalf of the Government that the conditions attached to grants in respect of future schemes would be more favourable to the local authorities. A large extension of the road programme was also decided upon. A Bill was prepared and carried through Parliament without delay to accelerate and cheapen procedure in respect of schemes requiring Parliamentary sanction.

£135,000,000 WORK SCHEMES

The position on September 30, 1930, in relation both to long and short-term measures for providing employment and increasing national and industrial efficiency is broadly indicated by the following figures:—

The total estimated expenditure necessary to carry out all the schemes approved for grants or guarantees was £135,000,000.

The total of £135,000,000 is composed of:—

Unemployment Grants Committee	**£47,000,000**
Home Development	**28,000,000**
Colonial Development	**8,000,000**
Roads Schemes	**50,000,000**
Miscellaneous Schemes	**2,000,000**
	£135,000,000

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The schemes approved by the Unemployment Grants Committee—mainly local authority undertakings and electricity work—accounted for £47,000,000. More than half of this represented schemes on which work had started.

HOME AND COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT

Approvals of Home Development schemes (railways, docks, water, gas) submitted by statutory bodies amounted to £28,000,000. Schemes involving an expenditure of £10,000,000 had been commenced. Several other important schemes, including the Northern Tube extension in London, and docks and water undertakings, were nearing the stage at which work would be started. The first contract for the Tube extension was arranged at the beginning of the autumn. Colonial Development schemes amounted to £8,000,000, of which over £3,000,000 is to be spent in Great Britain.

ROAD PROGRAMME

Under the special schemes of work in connection with the Road Fund, trunk road works estimated to cost £15,000,000, and five years' programme works for classified roads of £25,000,000, as well as annual programme works of over £9,000,000 had been approved in principle or for commencement.

LOCAL ACTIVITY STIMULATED

The effect of the appeal to local authorities at the July Conference was seen in a rapid increase in the number of schemes submitted to the Unemployment Grants Committee for approval. During August schemes which were still the subject of investigation, or actually under consideration by the Committee, rose from 810 to 1,079, and the total estimated cost from £12,000,000 to £16,000,000, although in the interval schemes involving an expenditure of several million pounds had been approved.

TORY CONTRAST

The full significance of these figures can only be realised in the light of the record of the preceding Tory Government. The Tory Government adopted deliberately a policy of drift and discouragement of schemes for creating employment, in the baseless hope that the situation would improve automatically. Consequently, the submission of schemes by local authorities fell in the two years, July, 1926, to June, 1928, to so low a point that the total expenditure involved was only £1,111,000.

Under pressure of public discontent and the approaching General Election of 1929 a Labour transference scheme was then initiated, but from July, 1928, to May, 1929, the further schemes approved by the Unemployment Grants Committee totalled only £5,700,000.

In three years the schemes approved by the Unemployment Grants Committee amounted to £6,800,000, as compared with £47,000,000 in the first year of Labour Government.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT, 1930

The Unemployment Insurance Act, which came into operation on March 13, 1930, fulfilled the pledge of the Labour Party to deal effectively with the widespread grievance arising from the administration of the "not genuinely seeking work" provision in preceding legislation.

Under a rigid interpretation of this provision many thousands of workers in the depressed areas were deprived of benefits because they failed constantly to tramp the countryside, in all weathers, seeking work which everybody knew did not exist.

A reasonable safeguard against abuse was substituted in the new Act for this provision, and the effect of this is that it must be proved that an unemployed person has wilfully rejected suitable work before benefit can be disallowed.

The following other changes brought about by the Act may be noted:—

An increase in insurance benefit for certain classes of unemployed who have been on an extremely low scale.

A provision that, except in trade disputes, claims for benefit can no longer be disallowed except on the authority of a Court of Referees.

RELIEF OF LOCAL RATES

The estimated number of persons brought into benefit by the combined changes in the Act was estimated at 170,000. The Poor Law returns show that as compared with March, just before the Act came into operation, there was by the end of June a decrease of about 125,000 in England and Wales alone in the number of persons receiving outdoor relief on account of unemployment. This reduction of the burden on local ratepayers is mainly attributable to the effect of the new Act.

WASHINGTON HOURS CONVENTION

In accordance with the pledge to ratify the Washington 48 Hours Convention, the Minister of Labour engaged in consultations with representatives of Trade Unions and other concerns, with the object of removing certain difficulties in the way of ratification.

When agreement was reached, a Bill was at once drafted, but owing to a congestion in Parliamentary business in the latter part of the Session there was no time to pass the measure through the ordinary stages. It was, therefore, carried over to the next Session (1930–31).

TRADE BOARD FOR CATERING WORKERS

Investigations into the working conditions in the catering trade were instituted, and they revealed the need for action to protect the poorer paid and overworked employees. The Minister of Labour, therefore, decided just before the end of the Session to establish a Trade Board for these workers. The preliminary steps have been taken.

SHOP WORKERS' CONDITIONS

A Select Committee to inquire into the conditions of shop workers was set up by the Minister of Labour, and a general inquiry into conditions in shops is also being carried out jointly by the Home Office and the Ministry of Labour.

ADMINISTRATIVE WORK AT THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR

The centres for training unemployed workers for whom there is little or no chance of reabsorption in their own occupations has been extended. New centres which have been opened, or which will shortly be opened, will increase the total accommodation to 4,300, and make possible the training of 10,000 men and youths each year.

Arrangements have been made whereby youths who were helping to support their families out of unemployment pay can live at the centres and have a special remittance of 9*s*. a week made to their homes.

The provision for school training of boys and girls who have been unable to obtain employment after leaving school has also been widely extended.

WIDOWS' PENSIONS

THE Conservative Act of 1925, constituting the scheme of Widows' Pensions, evoked a widespread sense of grievance and injustice by excluding from its benefits scores of thousands of women on the borderline of the rigid conditions laid down by the Act.

In many instances a difference of a few weeks in the death of a husband, or the lack of a few insurance contributions, meant the loss of the pension.

The Labour Party pledged itself to abolish these injustices, which the Tory Government refused to deal with, on the ground that the sacred contributory principle would be undermined.

The Labour Government promptly redeemed the pledge. An amending Act was passed in 1929, and it was estimated that the effect would be to bring in ultimately about 500,000 widows excluded by the earlier Act.

About 210,000 of these became eligible on July 1, 1930. Ten days later Mr. Greenwood, Minister of Health, announced that already 160,000 new pensions had been awarded, and it was estimated that a further 85,000 widows would become eligible for pensions at the end of 1930. In addition, over 20,000 wives have been given old age pensions under the new Act.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

BRITISH LEADERSHIP AND PRESTIGE RESTORED

THE measure of Labour's achievement in the sphere of foreign affairs is sufficiently indicated by the astonishing transformation in Anglo-American relations and in the degree of prestige enjoyed by British representatives at Geneva. When the Labour Government took office, the state of feeling in the United States gave ample cause for anxiety. At the meetings of the League of Nations, British statesmen had ceased either to take a leading part, or to exercise an influence within the League commensurate with British opinion in favour of a League policy.

A complete change was quickly brought about by the Labour Government. The vigorous progressive policy initiated in 1924 was at once restored. British leadership was regained, and the prestige of Great Britain in the councils of the nations rose rapidly.

This was the outcome of the Prime Minister's discussions with the United States President and Ambassador, the energetic and persuasive activities of Mr. Henderson at Geneva, and the combination of strength and tactfulness in the policy of Mr. Snowden and Mr. Graham at The Hague Conferences.

The common purpose inspiring all these efforts and activities is a passionate determination to promote the cause of world peace and progressive disarmament. This was forcibly expressed in an impressive speech by the Foreign Secretary at the Assembly of the League in September.

The difficulties confronting all who are working for the peaceful settlement of international disputes and the abolition of war are formidable, but the great contribution of the British Labour Government, in its first Session, to the strengthening of the League for this extremely important task, is admitted in all countries.

The following are the outstanding achievements:—

DISARMAMENT

The Pact between the British Commonwealth, the United States of America and Japan for the limitation of naval armaments reduced the existing battleships of these three Powers by nine, stopped the building of new battleships till 1936, and fixed the minimum level for cruiser, destroyer and submarine categories for the British Commonwealth and the United States of America at 541,000 tons, as compared with the demands of the Conservative Government at Geneva in 1927 for 737,000 tons. The financial saving to Great Britain resulting from the Treaty is considerabld. About £4,000,000 has been saved by reducing at once from 20 to 15 battleships and battle cruisers. The replacement of battleships as under the Washington Treaty, now avoided, might have necessitated an expenditure of £50,000,000 on ten battleships up to the end of 1936. We have been saved a further expenditure of £13,000,000 on the Conservative programme for cruisers, destroyers and submarines. **Moreover, and even more important, the race in naval armaments between the British Commonwealth of Nations, the United States and Japan has been brought to an end.**

Although for reasons entirely outside the control of Great Britain it was impossible at this stage to bring France and Italy fully into agreement, what has actually been accomplished will take a foremost place in the history of disarmament efforts.

WORLD PEACE

At the Tenth Assembly of the League at Geneva, 1929, constructive proposals were put forward by the British representatives, relating to the harmonising of the covenant of the League with the Kellogg Pact; the status and independence of the Secretariat of the League; the ratification of general conventions drawn up under the auspices of the League; international economic co-operation to reduce existing barriers to international trade; and the limitation of the manufacture of dangerous drugs.

The Preparatory Commission, which was engaged on the draft of a General Convention on disarmament, was instructed to take up its work again in November, 1930, and complete it as speedily as possible. The acceptance of new instruments by Great Britain, designed to complete or to strengthen the machinery of the Covenant on the side of security, would only become effective when Disarmament had become a reality.

INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION

The Tory Government had stubbornly refused to sign the Optional Clause, which binds the countries on whose behalf it is signed and ratified, to submit disputes of a legal character to the Permanent Court of International Justice. The Labour Government signed the clause together with all the other Governments of the Commonwealth. The international effect of this is revealed by the fact that the number of signatories rose from 27 in August, 1929, to 41 in June, 1930.

EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

At The Hague Conferences the attainment of agreements for the final settlement of important questions relating to reparations and inter-allied indebtedness, and for the evacuation of the Rhineland, was mainly due to vigorous British leadership.

The benefits to Great Britain are substantial. An agreement was secured by which Italy is to purchase annually for three years 1,000,000 tons of Welsh coal for the State railways and electricity undertakings.

Reparations deliveries by Germany to continental countries included many classes of goods produced in the United Kingdom. The effect was therefore harmful to British trade. It was not found possible to abolish the system altogether, but, thanks to the efforts of Mr. Graham, a large immediate reduction in the amount of these deliveries in kind was brought about. It was also provided that there should be a rapid annual decrease, and that at the end of 10 years these deliveries would cease altogether.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Full diplomatic and trade relations have been restored with Soviet Russia. This has made possible the extension of export trade facilities to Russian trade, and the effect is already seen in a substantial increase in the exports of manufactured goods from this country to Russia.

The lead has been taken in attempts to settle outstanding questions with the Chinese Government. The effort to reach agreement with Egypt on the terms of a treaty broke down only on the question of the Sudan, and an attempt to remove this difficulty will be made when a favourable opportunity offers itself.

A definite advance has been made towards the attainment of self-government by Iraq, and admission to the League after 1932.

In all these countries the policy of the Labour Government has created more friendly relations with Great Britain.

SAFETY AT SEA

A movement of great importance to seamen employed on cargo vessels was initiated by the President of the Board of Trade, when he convened on behalf of the Government an International Conference to discuss the establishment of uniform load-line rules for all maritime countries. The report of the British Load-line Committee appointed in 1927 was the basis of discussion.

The outcome was the unanimous adoption of a Convention, which was signed on July 5 by representatives of 27 Governments. This Convention establishes for the first time uniform safety rules for all the cargo ships of the world, and it has been described by the organisation of British Seamen as a valuable progressive measure.

Provisions for securing the effective closing of exposed deck and side openings, and for the protection of crews, have been specially welcomed as a contribution to the well-being of all sailors.

COAL INDUSTRY REORGANISATION

MINE WORKERS' LOWER HOURS

WHEN the Labour Government took office, the efforts to establish schemes for the organised production and sale of coal, and for the regulation of supply in accordance with market demands, had broken down in several districts. Even in Yorkshire, Lancashire and the Midland districts—which were all included in what was known as the Five Counties Scheme—where much greater progress had been made than in the rest of the country, the existence of a minority of owners who stood aloof was a source of constant weakness.

The Scottish scheme had completely broken down. There were serious difficulties preventing the general acceptance of a revised South Wales scheme, while in Durham and Northumberland hardly any progress had been made.

The Coal Mines Act, 1930, has brought this deadlock to an end, and has ensured that a sound system of regulation shall have a fair trial in every coalfield.

> **The chaos, uncertainty, and cut-throat competition which have involved the industry in great loss for ten years, and to which may be attributed very largely the disastrous conflicts and the heavy reductions suffered by the mine workers will be ended. A stable basis, on which a more general reorganisation of the industry can proceed, will be established.**

By a compromise—which is justified by the bad economic position of the coalfields when the Act was drafted—the Act provides for a reduction of the working time underground by half an hour in December, 1930, as the first step towards the restoration of the seven hour day.

REGULATED PRODUCTION AND FAIR PRICES

The object of Part I of the Act is to establish machinery for effective regulation of output to avoid over-production and excessive price-cutting (not to *restrict* output in order to maintain high prices), and for price-fixing on a reasonable basis, with safeguards to protect consumers against unfair prices.

A Central Council of the Mine Owners will fix the total national production periodically, and divide it into quotas for the various districts.

In each district, or group of districts which may elect to act together, there will be an Executive Board which will allocate the district quota to each of the mines or undertakings. These Boards will also fix minimum prices for specified classes of coal.

Participation in the schemes is compulsory on all colliery owners, so that in no case can a minority frustrate the efforts of a majority. Safeguards for the rights of individual owners are secured, however, by provisions for the reference to independent arbitration of disputes arising out of the fixing of quotas and prices, or other matters connected with the general operation of the schemes. Power is given to the Central Council and the District Executive Boards to impose penalties for contravention of the approved regulations.

SAFEGUARDS FOR CONSUMERS

The Board of Trade is given, in the public interest, wide powers of supervision of the schemes, and if any district fails to produce a scheme the Secretary for Mines can himself make the necessary scheme. He is also charged with the responsibility of appointing Committees of Investigation—a National Committee, and one for each district—to investigate any complaints arising out of the operation of the schemes apart from those which can be referred to arbitration.

> **The main concern of these committees—on which consumers, mine owners, and mine workers are represented—will be the interest of the general public. They will act through the Board of Trade.**

WIDER REORGANISATION

A much greater measure of unification of ownership and control of the mines is an essential first step to the wider reorganisation which is urgently necessary. The Act provides for the appointment by the Board of Trade of a Coalmines Reorganisation Commission, and an adequate expert staff, to promote and accelerate schemes of unification.

While the first efforts of the Commissioners will no doubt be directed to the stimulation of voluntary schemes they are endowed with powers which will enable them to take the initiative where it is necessary, and in the last resort to ask the Court of the Railway and Canal Commission to impose a scheme by compulsory order.

The need for compulsion was recognised, and the general principle admitted, in a Tory Act of 1926, but this was so drafted that it has been futile in practice.

BETTER DISTRIBUTION METHODS

For the first time organisations will be brought into existence making it possible for the affairs of the whole industry to be regulated in an orderly manner, and for greater control to be exercised over the distribution of coal. The possibility of great savings in this field is generally admitted. There are already indications that the operation of the Act will lead to important changes in the methods, and to a reduction in the costs, of distribution.

The economies that are attainable in this and other ways opened out by the Act should be ample not only to make possible the reduction in hours without any adverse effect on wages, but to contribute substantially to the recovery of prosperity in the industry generally.

It cannot be expected, in view of the world-wide changes which have seriously injured the British coal industry, that this Act will solve the whole unemployment problem in the coalfields, but ultimately it will ensure greater stability and better conditions for those whom the industry can continue to employ.

NATIONAL WAGES BOARD

For the first time also legislative provision is made for the establishment of a National Industrial Board, to which dispute as to the terms of a proposed district agreement dealing with wages and conditions in the industry may be referred. The findings of this Board will not be binding, so that the right to strike or to lock men out is not taken away.

It cannot be doubted, however, that the opportunity afforded for the calm review of the issues in a dispute will be an important factor making for the peaceful settlement of disputes which might otherwise lead to costly conflicts.

GENERAL CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORT

The Coal Mines Act has thrown a great deal of administrative work on the Mines Department. An important associated task is concerned with developments which the Act makes possible, but which will not take place automatically. Drive and initiative are necessary, and the Secretary for Mines has lost no opportunity to apply these qualities.

Recent investigations, especially during the Scandinavian tour of Mr. Shinwell and a number of colliery owners and exporters, have strengthened the conviction that a solution of the problem of price-cutting competition in the export market cannot be solved except by an international agreement. Efforts are therefore being made to open the way to consulation on this manner. This has been impossible in the past because of the non-existence of any central organisation for the industry, such as that created by the Labour Government's Act.

The Minister is also endeavouring to bring about the formation of selling syndicates for the home market to supplement the output control and price-fixing boards set up under the Act. Actual selling by syndicates would simplify distribution, effect great economies, divert more of the present margin between pithead and consumers' prices to the producers without adversely affecting consumers, and so help to maintain a better standard of life for the mine workers.

THE MINER'S SAFETY

Despite all preventive efforts under existing conditions the number of mine accidents shows a disquieting tendency to rise. Therefore the safety question becomes ever more urgent, and it is now being approached in a new way.

The Miners' Federation and the Mining Association have responded to a suggestion that sub-committees should be appointed by each body to keep in close touch with the Minister so that the fullest consultation can take place. Conference discussions in the coalfields between the Minister and representatives of the colliery owners and managers, mine workers, and the inspectorate have also been inaugurated. It is hoped that a scheme for the establishment of Safety Committees at the mines will result from these discussions.

A movement has been set on foot to regulate and reduce overtime in the mines, and the Lanarkshire owners have already appointed a committee to consider this matter, with which are associated important questions relating to health, safety and employment.

Following the failure of the attempt at the last Conference of the International Labour Office to secure an International Convention on mine hours, Mr. Shinwell has suggested that before the next Conference an effort should be made to find a basis of agreement on policy between the different Governments concerned.

OIL FROM COAL

Active interest is being taken in all the questions relating to the scientific utilisation of coal, and especially to the problems of the production of oil by low temperature carbonisation and hydrogenation processes.

The importance of this matter is self-evident. The aim of the Minister is to bring about a co-ordination and extension of research and experiment so that speedier progress may be made in the commercial operation of the more promising processes, and in the use of smokeless fuel.

THE FINAL SOLUTION

Experience in recent months has confirmed the belief that the most rapid advance towards the general reorganisation of the coal industry, that is so urgently needed, could take place only if the industry were completely unified and placed under the control of a Public Corporation.

Whatever the Mines Department, or the Minister, may desire to do to improve the position of the industry, the only method available in most instances is that of consultation and persuasive effort, which may be obstructed at every turn by those who are indifferent or actively hostile.

ATTACK ON TOWN AND COUNTRY SLUMS

WELCOME FOR LABOUR'S HOUSING ACT

IN the first two or three years after the war there may have been some excuse for neglect of the slums. Preoccupation with the general housing shortage was inevitable.

The position of the Tory Government of 1924—29, however, was very different from that of its predecessors. Mr. Wheatley's Act, carried by the first Labour Government, had cleared the way for steady progress so far as ordinary housing was concerned. Building programmes had been prepared and were operating smoothly. It was now possible to tackle the slum evil.

Yet during five years of Tory inaction the problem grew rapidly more serious. Overcrowding was deplorable. More and more houses were becoming unfit for human habitation.

LOCAL DIFFICULTIES

Many local authorities were seriously concerned at the results of surveys which revealed the extent and gravity of the evil. With all their financial burdens, however, they were unable, without wider powers and substantially greater State assistance, to act on the scale demanded by the urgency of the need.

Help which would have made possible a vigorous attack on slum conditions was denied by Mr. Baldwin's Government. Mr. Churchill was eager to relieve a relatively small number of the wealthiest people by reducing the super-tax, but the unfortunate masses herding in the slum areas, or enduring the discomfort and disease inseparable from the conditions in the decaying cottages of the countryside, were outside the scope of this solicitude for the rich.

LABOUR'S PLEDGE FULFILLED

The Labour Party gave a pledge in the Election Manifesto that it would "deal drastically with the Slum disgrace."

This pledge has been fulfilled in the Housing Act, which was drafted after the fullest consultations with local authorities. It was passed into law at the end of the Session, when the House of Lords made a determined, but unsuccessful, attempt to increase the compensation to slum owners to a point at which the purpose of the measure would have been largely frustrated.

CLEARANCE AND REHOUSING

By the operation of the Act entire slum areas will be swept away completely where degeneration has gone beyond redemption point. Other areas will be improved by repair, demolition, street widening, the provision of open spaces, and the prevention of over-crowding.

Single insanitary houses outside such areas can now be dealt with more effectively.

A transformation in rural housing is made possible. Dilapidated and insanitary cottages will be replaced, ordinary housing will be expanded, and special financial aid is given for the provision of houses for farm workers.

Rehousing in advance of demolition, both in town and country, is fully provided for.

A new system of grants, based on the actual number of persons displaced and rehoused, and calling for a large increase in the contribution from State funds, will make it possible for local authorities to fix low rents for the new dwellings.

For the first time State aid is made available for the building of small houses for older people without families, similar to the attractive little homes for aged miners in some of the Durham colliery towns and villages. *This will be a boon for many old age pensioners.*

The general powers of the Minister of Health are strengthened. Initiative must remain with the local authorities in the new slum campaign, but intervention by the Minister is provided for if an obvious duty is neglected in any district.

The Act has been welcomed enthusiastically by all housing reformers and an energetic campaign to make its operation as effective as possible has been initiated.

While a Labour Government remains in Office, there can be no possibility of a continuance of past neglect and failure to blot out the Slum Disgrace.

RENT RESTRICTIONS ACTS

The Government decided to set up a strong Departmental Committee to review every aspect of the present operation of the Rent Restrictions Acts.

Many inequalities, anomalies, and hardships have been created by changes in the situation since the last inquiry in 1923. It is the intention of the Government to do everything possible to remove these, but full knowledge is required before action can be taken.

Meanwhile the operation of the Acts was extended at the end of 1929, and this extension will be carried over 1931.

TRANSPORT & ELECTRICITY

THE Road Traffic Act, prepared under the direction of Mr. Herbert Morrison, Minister of Transport, is a vastly different document from the draft Bill circulated in 1927 by the Tory Minister of Transport "for the purpose of discussion."

The Labour measure embodies a definite conception of public service and creates the administrative conditions under which a steady advance can be made in the organisation of the road transport industry on a nationally co-ordinated basis.

Instead of 1,300 separate authorities for licensing vehicles, acting without reference to each other and without a uniform policy, there are created twelve areas to be controlled by traffic commissions, which will be the licensing authorities for the respective areas.

The commissions will have close contacts with each other and the Minister. Licensing will be determined by national as well as district requirements, and the commissioners will have power to co-ordinate services and regulate running-time schedules.

ORDER OUT OF CHAOS

The chaotic provision of redundant road services, leading to excessive competition and bad working conditions for the drivers and other employees, will be checked.

GREATER MUNICIPAL FREEDOM

For a long time municipalities have been fighting for greater freedom to run omnibus services, and the limitations imposed on them hitherto have greatly handicapped them in competition with private services.

Under the Act it will no longer be necessary to seek special parliamentary powers to operate bus services. If an authority has already power to operate road transport of any kind it is now enabled to apply to the traffic commissioners for licenses.

PROTECTION FOR WORKERS AND PUBLIC

Protection for the workers is afforded by provisions which place a statutory limit on the working hours of drivers of passenger and goods vehicles, and ensure that the principle of the Fair Wages Clause is applied to persons employed in connection with the operation of road passenger services.

A greater degree of safety for the public will be assured by the limitation of hours; the regulation of time-tables and the consequent diminution of excessive speed; and by the appointment of Certifying Officers and public service vehicle examiners who are charged with the responsibility of securing that vehicles are fit for service.

SPEED-LIMIT

The abolition of the speed-limit for light motor cars and cycles is only a legal recognition of the fact that in practice the limit is rarely observed. The penalties for reckless and dangerous driving, however, are substantially increased.

The Act authorises the Minister of Transport to issue a code of road conduct which should conduce to greater safety both for the occupants of vehicles and for pedestrians.

COMPULSORY THIRD-PARTY RISK INSURANCE

The provision for compulsory third-party risk insurance is justified by the number of cases in which, when persons have been injured or killed, owing to negligent driving, damages have been unobtainable because the driver was not insured and was not a person of substance.

BOLD BUT PRACTICAL MEASURE

When the Act is fully in operation—a process that will come about by stages, mainly between December, 1930, and May, 1931—it will be more fully recognised that it is a bold and imaginative, but eminently practical, measure to promote the ordered use of the nation's roads for the maximum benefit of all.

ROAD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

A foremost place in the administrative achievements of the Labour Minister of Transport is taken by the trunk and classified roads programmes in connection with the Road Fund. As a contribution to the provision of work for the unemployed, a programme has been worked out for improving trunk roads at an estimated total cost of £21,000,000. For classified roads a five years' plan has been devised, and the total expenditure on this account will be £27,500,000. As pointed out earlier, schemes under these two programmes to cost £40,000,000 have already been approved.

Generous concessions in regard to grants have made it possible for heavily burdened authorities to co-operate wholeheartedly in this work.

NEW THAMES TUNNEL

In addition to these schemes the construction of the Dartford-Purfleet tunnel under the Thames has been sanctioned. This will greatly facilitate cross-river traffic on the eastern side of London.

BRIDGES AND LEVEL CROSSINGS

The local authorities all over the country are being stimulated by substantial grants to reconstruct weak bridges and to eliminate level crossings.

HOME DEVELOPMENT

The work involved in the examination of development schemes submitted by railways and electricity undertakings has fallen very heavily on the Ministry during Labour's first year of office, owing to the importance attached to these enterprises in connection with the policy of providing employment and increasing national efficiency in every possible way. Important matters relating to the improvement of docks, harbours, and canals have also been dealt with.

ELECTRICITY WORK ACCELERATED

Especially noteworthy is a £9,000,000 scheme for the standardisation of frequency in the North-Eastern district of England in connection with the electricity grid scheme. Without special aid this work could only have been carried out very slowly, and the progress of the scheme would have been seriously delayed. The approval of a grant applied for by the Central Electricity Board has made it possible to accelerate the work to provide a substantial amount of employment and to create conditions favourable to the manufacturers of the necessary equipment.

LONDON TRAFFIC PROBLEM

The change from a Tory to a Labour Government came just in time to prevent the London County Council tramways from passing under the control of a private enterprise combine.

Following the rejection of this measure, Mr. Morrison expressed the view that the London traffic problem could not be solved without the elimination of unnecessary and uneconomic competition, and some far-reaching measure of unification under public ownership.

The problem is admittedly difficult, involving intricate financial adjustment, and the Government therefore secured the services of an eminent firm of chartered accountants to make the investigations necessary before the formulation of any scheme could be attempted.

As soon as this financial information was available the Minister arranged conferences with representatives of all the interests concerned, and the project is being energetically examined in detail. Legislation will follow during the Session 1930–31.

HELP FOR AGRICULTURE

LAND SETTLEMENT AND BETTER MARKETING

THE restoration of agriculture to a sound economic condition is one of the principal aims of the Labour Government. The importance of a revitalised countryside is fully realised. The policy which has been worked out is based on the belief that a great task of reorganisation is necessary, and that it must in the main be carried out by those in the industry, but that help and encouragement can be given by the State in various ways.

It is held that farmers are merely deluded when they are led to believe that food taxes to promote corn-growing will promote prosperity.

The Labour policy is constructive and comprehensive. It aims at helping the farmers to help themselves, and it is designed to improve the conditions of the agricultural workers and to extend employment on the land.

FOUR-FOLD POLICY

The proposals, which are the result of careful investigation and consideration of expert opinion, fall broadly into four divisions:

(1) An extensive increase in the facilities for settlement on the land.

(2) The development of both small-scale and large-scale cultivation.

(3) Organised marketing.

(4) The development of agricultural education and scientific methods of farming.

LAND SETTLEMENT

The main proposals in connection with land settlement are:—

A wide extension of the provision of ordinary smallholdings for general cultivation; specialised smallholdings for market gardening and poultry keeping; cottage holdings to be available for any suitable tenant; plots of land of about half an acre near the homes of unemployed workers; and ordinary allotments.

The endowment of the Minister of Agriculture with effective powers to bring the present inertia to an end, and to enable him to act in full co-operation with local authorities, or, where it is necessary, to ensure more rapid progress, to acquire land and provide holdings and allotments independently.

The creation of the fullest opportunities for qualified and suitable men, including unemployed, to earn a livelihood on full-time holdings, or to supplement incomes and food supplies by the cultivation of smaller areas of land.

The provision of credit facilities to provide working capital for qualified men who would not otherwise have the means to cultivate smallholdings.

The payment from State funds of any loss incurred in the working of allotments when the land is specially acquired for, and let to, unemployed workers.

LARGE-SCALE FARMING

The proposals for the encouragement of large-scale farming are based on the conviction of many experts that in suitable areas much larger farms than those now existing in Great Britain are necessary if the fullest possible benefits are to be derived from the utilisation of modern machinery and the application of approved scientific methods of cultivation.

It is intended, therefore, to establish a body to be known as the Agricultural Land Corporation, with power to acquire and manage land, and to create large farms to be worked either directly or by selected fully qualified persons in the capacity of owners or tenants.

The Corporation will be removed as far as possible from political influence in order to ensure continuity of policy and freedom from harassing restrictions.

It is proposed that financial assistance should be provided by the State to enable the Corporation to begin its work—which would be on a strictly commercial basis. A number of farms would be established in various parts of the country, to serve as centres, where men could be trained for large-scale management and the methods and cultivation best adapted for this type of farming could be demonstrated.

ORGANISED MARKETING

The urgent need for a wide extension of co-operative marketing in British agriculture has long been recognised. It is the only means whereby

Waste in distribution and excessive intermediate profits can be eliminated.

The farmer can be assured of an adequate return for his labour.

The consumer can be assured a reasonable price for products of a guaranteed quality.

Hitherto many serious efforts to establish agricultural co-operative societies on a sound basis have failed because of the difficulties created by farmers who remain outside. For the same reason, other societies which have managed to survive have never been able to achieve all the potential advantages of co-operation for marketing. The Government

proposes, therefore, that where a body of agricultural producers is willing to establish a marketing organisation it shall have power to apply compulsion to a minority *if it so wishes*.

It is not intended that compulsion should be imposed by any outside authority, but that the matter shall be left entirely for the farmers themselves to decide. This proposal has been embodied in a Bill which was published just before the end of the last Session, so that it could be fully discussed by those concerned during the recess—the intention being to bring it before Parliament as early as possible in the second Session.

Safeguards are provided for both minorities of farmers and for consumers.

While the initiative is left to farmers, and no effort is made to impose any form of State control in this matter, it is proposed that Parliament should grant a sum of £625,000 from which long and short-term loans may be made—the short-term loans being free of interest—to enable marketing organisations to become soundly established.

EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

The Government proposes to extend the provision for agricultural education and research. It intends to set up an Agricultural Research Council, to be composed mainly of distinguished men of science, so that the work now being done by existing research organisations and institutions may be assisted, co-ordinated, and expanded.

Additional State assistance has already been arranged for to enable county councils to develop agricultural educational facilities, and the valuable practical contact between farmers, district lecturers and instructors.

A grant of £150,000 towards the cost of rebuilding the Royal Veterinary College has been promised in view of the great importance of the work of the college to the whole livestock industry.

ANIMAL DISEASES

As soon as the new Research Council is set up, it is intended to place before it a scheme for the extension of veterinary research. The Government holds that the amount now spent in research on animal diseases is altogether inadequate, having regard to the heavy losses to the farming community from these diseases (foot and mouth disease, for example) and to the menace to the health of human beings, particularly that arising from tuberculosis in cattle.

SAFEGUARDING THE WORKERS

A notable example of the watchful interest of the Labour Minister in the conditions of farm workers is afforded by the action of Lord Noel Buxton (Dr. Addison's predecessor) in appointing in 1929 additional inspectors to investigate cases of refusal to pay minimum wages.

As a result of the activities of these inspectors, in a few months arrears of wages witheld by farmers, amounting to £3,218, were recovered for 307 workers.

THE LAND DRAINAGE ACT

EFFECTIVE MEASURES TO STOP FLOODING

THE question of land drainage is not one likely to arouse wide public interest, but it is very important to everyone who lives in districts liable to flooding, and especially to farmers who suffer heavy losses when their land becomes waterlogged.

It has been admitted for a long time that legislation on this subject was out of date, obscure, and altogether inadequate for modern needs.

Labour policy was set forth in 1928, following the publication in the previous year of a report by a Royal Commission, which declared that "at least 1,755,000 acres of land are in immediate need of drainage."

The Labour Government promoted a measure—the Land Drainage Act of 1930—which embodies the most important recommendations of the Commission.

Hitherto, schemes have been limited in scope. There has been no authority with power to deal with the whole catchment area of a main river, and consequently full benefit has never been obtained from the expenditure on the work done in smaller areas.

A DRASTIC CHANGE

All this is drastically changed by the new Act. Its provisions are necessarily technical, but the general effect is to establish new administrative machinery and provide adequate funds to enable a wide extension of drainage work to be carried out on a systematic and effective plan.

New authorities are to be set up—to be known as Catchment Boards—with power to deal with the whole drainage areas of main rivers. The older authorities will continue to be responsible for tributary rivers, but they will have greater powers and resources, and additional bodies of this kind will be set up wherever necessary.

The funds derived from local drainage rates will be supplemented by State contributions, and assistance will also be continued in respect of special schemes in connection with unemployment relief measures.

EDUCATION

NEW PROGRESS OVER WIDE FIELD

THE whole sum of the Labour Government's activity in the sphere of education must necessarily be made up of many items varying in the degree of their importance. This activity is also, to a great extent, indirect. The Board of Education directs the policy, and may use various expedients to set the pace, but it has to depend in the long run on the spirit animating the local education authorities.

The educational policy of the Party was set out in the Election Manifesto as follows :—

" It will raise the school-leaving age to fifteen with the requisite Maintenance Grants, and at once develop facilities

for Free Secondary Education. Labour will open the road, to whoever is able to take it, from the Nursery School to the University."

In this general review of the whole record of the Government it is only possible to indicate in the broadest outline what has been done already to achieve this aim.

NURSERY SCHOOLS & SPECIAL SERVICES

In 1929 a joint appeal was made to local authorities by the Minister of Health (Mr. A. Greenwood) and the President of the Board of Education (Sir Charles Trevelyan) to utilise more widely their powers to provide Nursery Schools, Nursery Classes and Day Nurseries.

This appeal has stimulated wide interest in the vital importance of grappling with the volume of disease and defect which has hitherto established itself in the child population before it enters school. By the end of Labour's first Session the number of Nursery Schools had already been increased from 28 to 37, and 72 more were on the way or in prospect.

Other evidence of the quickening effect of Labour influence on the movement to build up the health and stamina of the rising generation can be seen in the following directions:—

(1) The increase in staff and the extension in scope of the School Medical Service. A large increase is recorded in the treatment of defective vision, nose and throat, and dental troubles and minor ailments all of which, if neglected, produce in later life a costly crop of disease and impaired health.

(2) The provision of over 2,000 more places in 22 new Day and Residential Special Schools for blind, delicate, crippled and mentally defective children. Thirteen of these are Open-air Schools.

(3) The active support given by the Board of Education to the National Milk Publicity Council's scheme for supplying mid-morning milk in the schools—free where necessary, but on the basis of a payment by the parents where possible. 400,000 children are already benefiting daily.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

It is the policy of Labour to bring about as rapidly as possible the changes in organisation and method recommended by the Hadow Committee. The main object is that every child on reaching the age of eleven shall be able to start a real course of higher education in a new environment.

This involves a radical adaptation of the elementary system and of the elementary schools, as well as much closer co-ordination of the elementary and secondary systems, which have hitherto been run on parallel lines.

The advance in this direction has been hastened by the Government's decision to raise the school-leaving age to 15. This has compelled the local authorities to take stock of the whole position, and to go ahead with the necessary arrangements.

The new policy is to transfer the children at eleven to separate schools, and to provide from this stage a four years' course of progressive education.

Concurrently it is the aim of the Government to reduce the number of over-large classes; to improve both the qualification of teachers and their opportunities for attending "Refresher Courses"; to eliminate or reconstruct bad school premises and to encourage a far wider provision of playing fields. In all these directions substantial progress is being made.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The development of secondary and technical education is in line with this policy.

Definite progress has been made towards complete free secondary education, and revised regulations have already made it possible for local authorities to provide that at least 50 per cent. of admissions to Secondary Schools may be reserved for free pupils.

TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION

In the eighteen months which ended on September 30, 1930, capital expenditure sanctioned on Technical and Further Education totalled £900,000, compared with £491,000 in the year 1928–29, the previously existing record. To raise the school-leaving age is to provide a broader and more solid foundation for Technical and Further Education.

THE UNIVERSITIES

The provision of State Scholarships to the Universities, which had been suspended during the economy campaign, was restored by the first Labour Government of 1924, and the present Government has still further widened this avenue for poorer students of exceptional ability. In addition the annual grant to the Universities has been increased by £250,000.

MAIN PLANK OF THE PROGRAMME

The main plank in the Government's policy, however, is the raising of the school-leaving age to 15, with the necessary provision for maintenance allowances. The effect of this in producing a better educated nation will far more than repay the cost.

To enable the local authorities to make the necessary preparation for this great change special grants are being given for buildings; additional teachers are being trained, and accommodation provided at a rate never before equalled in educational history.

70 per cent. of the cost of raising the age will fall on State funds, leaving only 30 per cent. to be provided out of local rates.

EFFECT ON EMPLOYMENT

Incidentally, the general educational programme of the Government is contributing in no small measure to the alleviation of unemployment.

The acceleration of school building, re-equipment, the provision of better supplies of books and apparatus, and the laying out of new playing fields, have stimulated employment in a number of trades.

Mr. SNOWDEN'S BUDGET

EVASIONS OF WEALTHY TAXPAYERS PREVENTED

IN his budget for 1930–31 Mr. Snowden had to increase taxation by £34,500,000 in the present year and £46,500,000 in a full year. This has been attributed entirely to the expenditure of the Labour Government.

The facts are that, apart from the extra cost of widows' pensions and unemployment insurance for which the Government certainly has no apology to offer, the Chancellor had to provide in a full year for an additional £15,000,000 to meet the cost of Tory derating, and also a first instalment of £5,000,000 towards the liquidation of the deficit in the preceding year.

The outcry of the Tories against the budget arose partly from the fact that Mr. Snowden completely reversed Mr. Churchill's policy of reducing direct taxation and increasing indirect taxation and raiding every national reserve on which he could lay his hands.

The Labour Chancellor provided for a graduated increase in the surtax (the old supertax) and restored the income tax rate from 4*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* in the £, but with a modification which broadly had the result of relieving from the increase single taxpayers with incomes of less than £500 a year and married taxpayers with children whose incomes are less than £900 a year. It was a straightforward budget, in which no obligation was hidden.

The most bitter attacks and obstruction, however, were evoked by provisions designed to put an end to various subtle methods by which very wealthy people were able to avoid a substantial part of their tax liability.

Neither the angry outbursts of Mr. Churchill nor a prolonged and bitter obstructive campaign from the Tory benches could move the Chancellor from his position, and in the end he attained his purpose.

THE DEPRESSED INDUSTRIES

THE Government set itself without delay to stimulate all possible efforts to bring about the restoration of the depressed industries, while recognising that in the existing parliamentary situation the application of the full Labour policy was not possible.

COAL

The Coal Mines Act, which is dealt with in another section, has placed on the industry the duty and responsibilty of bringing about drastic changes on its commercial side, including the regulation of output as an essential factor in organised marketing.

SPECIAL INQUIRIES

Special inquiries by small expert committees were instituted for the cotton, steel and fisheries industries.

COTTON

The report of the Cotton Committee has made a deep impression on all sections of the industry, and has concentrated attention on the measures of reorganisation recommended.

STEEL

For special reasons it was not deemed advisable by the Government to publish the full report of the Steel Committee, but consultations on the document have taken place between representatives of the Government and the organisations of the employers and workers in the industry.

FISHERIES

An interim report of the Fisheries' Committee recommended the provision of a special survey vessel at an estimated cost of £80,000, and the provision of a sum of £34,000 a year for five years to meet the running expenses.

With the concurrence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, this recommendation was immediately adopted, and the Committee proceeded to consider other important matters affecting the well-being of the industry.

It is confidently expected that the survey work of the new vessel will open up new and profitable fishing areas in northern waters.

BRITISH TRADE ABROAD

EFFORTS TO EXPAND EXPORTS

THE Labour Government is associating itself with industry in every possible way in a united effort to increase the foreign trade of the country for the national well-being.

Stimulated by the initiative and enterprise of the Secretary for Overseas Trade, Mr. George M. Gillett, the Overseas Trade Department has entered upon a new era of energetic effort to promote the expansion of foreign markets.

Immediately on taking office the Labour Minister thoroughly reviewed the Overseas Services and came to the conclusion that the staff was inadequate for its purpose. In a previous economy campaign the number of representatives abroad had been cut down.

Eight of these posts were re-established and six new posts were created—including Russia and Latin America, where there are markets of vast potential importance to British exporters. The home organisation was also strengthened to give closer and more effective contacts with all British industries and commercial bodies interested in overseas trade.

A COUNCIL OF ACTION

In April, 1930, the Minister announced the appointment of an Overseas Trade Development Council, an act which will take a foremost place in the history of Government efforts to extend British trade. A number of

influential men in industry and commerce agreed to serve on this Council, and others accepted an invitation to be members of an Advisory Panel available for consultation at any time on special subjects.

The duty of the Council is to maintain a constant study of the problems of export trade, of present and potential markets, and of the trends of trade, with the object of making known all possible means by which a profitable expansion of British trade can be brought about.

The Minister's declaration at the time that this new body *was intended to be a Council of Action* was soon seen to be completely justified.

Two officials with special qualifications were appointed for continuous investigation work—one concerning himself with overseas markets, and the other with home conditions. Consultations between the Council and representatives of various industries were instituted immediately, and one of the first results was the inauguration of preparatory work in connection with a combined effort to gain a larger share of the growing markets of South America, partly through the opportunity given by the forthcoming Exhibition at Buenos Aires.

SHEFFIELD AND SOUTH AMERICA

The visit of a party led by the Master Cutler of Sheffield (Mr. A. K. Wilson) to South America on behalf of the Sheffield industries, is a direct result of the work of the Council. The greater part of the expense of the visit will be met by Sheffield, but the Government agreed to contribute up to a maximum of £750, and arrangements were made for the officers of the Department in South America to give all possible assistance to the Master Cutler and his colleagues.

The Council are at present in negotiation with several important trade groups, and it is confidently expected that in the near future further investigation work on behalf of particular industries undertaken by the trades themselves will be announced by Mr. Gillett.

IMPORTANT TRADE MISSIONS

The Government is convinced that investigations by expert Missions can do much to increase trade by obtaining knowledge of overseas market requirements, and making known to the industries and commercial organisations concerned what ought to be done both to retain and develop trade.

In accordance with this policy influential Missions have already been appointed to visit South Africa and the Far East. The Mission to the Far East is deserving of special reference owing to the fact that accompanying the Mission is a separate Cotton Sub-Mission, the expenses of which are largely being defrayed by the cotton industry itself. This is a concrete example of co-operation between the Government and industry as the Sub-Mission is in miniature a replica of the Joint Committee of Cotton Trade Organisations. In its ranks are to be found spinners, manufacturers, finishers, merchants and operatives.

The announcement has been made emphatically on behalf of the Overseas Trade Development Council that the reports of these Missions will not be pigeon-holed. On the contrary, vigorous efforts will be made, in concerted action with the trades concerned, to carry out whatever recommendations are made.

The Secretary for Overseas Trade has also appointed a Committee to consider what can be done to increase the usefulness of the British Industries Fair.

FOREIGN BUYERS AND DESIGN

It is sometimes suggested that British manufacturers lose a certain amount of trade because the importance of design as a selling factor abroad is not sufficiently realised. The Minister has therefore appointed a small Committee, of which he is Chairman, to examine this question fully and to make known to manufacturers the best advice available on this subject.

EXPORT CREDIT GUARANTEES

The scope of the Export Credits Guarantees Department was widened by authorising the Advisory Committee to consider from the beginning of August, 1929, applications in respect of transactions with Russia, which country had hitherto been excluded. There is already evidence that this action will result in a substantial increase in the exports to Russia. The period within which new guarantees may be given generally under the Acts of 1920–29 has been extended.

GREAT WAR PENSIONS

IMPROVEMENTS IN ADMINISTRATION

AT this date the scope for radical changes in the principles underlying the administration of war pensions is necessarily very limited. Nevertheless, in several ways the Labour Minister of Pensions, Mr. F. O. Roberts, has made improvements.

THE SEVEN YEARS' TIME LIMIT

The most important is the practical removal of the seven years' time limit. The effect of this is that any ex-Service man is now free to claim compensation on account of disability for which he has not previously claimed. If his claim is justified—that is, if he can show that the disability is due to service in the Great War—treatment or pension, as may be necessary, can be obtained.

Many of these late claims are very difficult, but all possible investigation is carried out to ensure that no injustice occurs.

Men claiming pension for the first time, although more than seven years after discharge, are now eligible, subject to the usual conditions to receive allowances in the case of hospital treatment as soon as the title is admitted by the Ministry of Pensions.

GENERAL

If any material difference arises between a man's own doctor and a Ministry doctor regarding treatment, the difficulty can now be referred to Medical Headquarters for decision.

Ten per cent. of the proceeds from the sale of small articles made in hospital workshops is now retained to provide amenities for the patients in the hospitals.

Grants can now be made more freely to enable pensioners' children, who show ability, to obtain higher education.

Orphan children, both of whose parents are dead, are now entitled to have their pensions continued, even after they are in employment, until their wages reach 12*s.* a week.

Children of ex-Service men who have lost both parents and who are permanent invalids, and therefore incapable of earning a living, can have any allowances they have been receiving up to 21 continued beyond that age so long as they remain in this condition, and are not otherwise provided for out of public funds.

These improvements have, in the aggregate, benefited many thousands of children.

Widows pensioned under Article 17A of the Royal Warrant have hitherto forfeited allowances for the children of their first marriage if they re-marry. Any widow drawing this class of pension in the future will have her children's allowances continued.

Wives of men who have had awards under special sanction can, in the event of their husband's death, be themselves considered for pension.

Sickness grants have been made available in certain classes of cases which were not formerly eligible for them.

Notification is now given to parents in receipt of pre-war dependence or flat-rate pensions that, on the death of the pensioner, the surviving parent can apply for and receive the pension.

The practice of asking an employer to furnish information as to a man's health record is now abolished in certain cases and is much restricted in others. No change in conditional award is made except after medical re-examination and the pensioner is so informed. Cases in which fresh representations as to the facts are brought to the Minister's notice are specially considered and dealt with.

These improvements will be of substantial benefit to many individuals.

AFFORESTATION

LARGE INCREASE IN GRANT

DESPITE the warnings of commissions and investigators over a long period that the timber supplies of Great Britain were being seriously depleted year by year without adequate replanting, succeeding governments have taken but a lukewarm interest in the subject of afforestation. It is true that a Forestry Commission was set up ten years ago, but it has been left to work with limited means, and during the régime of the economy axe even these means were further restricted.

Mr. Churchill decided that for the second ten years' programme the total grant for this period should be increased to £5,500,000. Shortly after the Labour Government came into office attention was given to this important matter, and Mr. Snowden agreed to a further increase up to £9,000,000, the view of the commissioners being that this was the largest sum that could be economically expended owing to the time needed for preparatory work and the training of expert forestry workers.

The increased grant will, however, make possible a substantial expansion of the annual planting area after the next two years, and the provision of small-holdings for the forestry workers will also be considerably extended.

MORE ENLIGHTENED MENTAL TREATMENT

THE Mental Treatment Act of 1930, which is based on the findings of a Royal Commission, brings the law on this subject into accord with humane and progressive ideas on the treatment of mental illness. It provides for greater discrimination than in the past. It lays stress on the preventive treatment of incipient mental illness by the provision of out-patient clinics, and the extension of facilities for voluntary treatment.

It opens the way to a further advance in bringing the treatment of mental illness more into line with that of other forms of illness. To this end it is provided that certain cases may be placed under care and treatment temporarily without certification; and opportunity is given to associate general hospitals (municipal and voluntary) in the treatment of mental illness. This treatment is also dissociated from the Poor Law. Extended provision is made for after-care, and for systematised research. Important changes are made in the administrative machinery.

The Board of Control, the national body mainly responsible for the administration of the law on this subject, expresses the view that the Act "marks a great and striking advance in the law governing the treatment of mental illness." The Board expresses its desire to co-operate with the local authorities in every possible way "to ensure the fullest realisation of the possibilities of progress which the Act affords."

CONSUMERS' COUNCIL BILL

ON November 5, 1929, Mr. W. Graham, President of the Board of Trade, called the attention of the House of Commons to the refusal of London milk distributors to carry out a recommendation of the Food Council relating to the retail prices of milk. He stressed the fact that this Council had no power to call for information required in the course of an investigation, or to compel the observance of its recommendations. He announced the intention of the Government to remedy these defects.

In April, 1930, the Food Council reported that the London Societies of Master Bakers had revised the scale of bread prices, to the detriment of consumers, without consulting the Council.

EFFECTIVE POWERS ASKED FOR

Shortly afterwards, the Government introduced the Consumers' Council Bill. This measure provided for the establishment of a Consumers' Council to investigate matters relating to the production, distribution, supply, or price of food stuffs, and certain other commodities in common use, and make recommendations to the Board of Trade.

The Bill conferred on the Council adequate powers to obtain whatever information they deemed necessary to make an inquiry effective, and it also empowered the Board of Trade to act on the recommendations of the Council, if necessary, by fixing maximum prices.

During the Committee Stage, in order to make the purpose of the Bill clearer, the Government gave notice of an amendment which would limit the price-fixing power of the Board of Trade to cases in which the Council reported that conditions existed restricting the free play of competition.

The Bill was very strongly contested in Committee, and every effort was made by opposition members to obstruct its progress.

On June 25, therefore, the Prime Minister announced that it would not be possible to pass the measure that Session, but that it would be re-introduced in the following Session and passed into law as soon as possible.

HELP FOR SCOTTISH INDUSTRIES

AN active policy of assistance for the farming and fishing industries of Scotland has been initiated.

AGRICULTURE

Encouragement of the scheme for grading and marking beef has yielded the following notable result:—

The number of Scottish national marked and graded beef sides sold in Smithfield Market in the week ending November 2, 1929	537
Average weekly number in September, 1930 ..	2,457

Approximately 90 per cent. of the Scotch beef in the London market is now graded and marked, and it secures a higher price. The Government paid the expenses of the graders and markers for the experiment.

An important scheme for the co-operative marketing of graded eggs was inaugurated in the Island of Skye. The Government undertook to give a fixed price during the summer months, and to pay the expenses of the scheme.

In Harris a deer forest has been acquired compulsorily for small holdings.

A committee of interested bodies, including farmers, has been set up to make recommendations for immediate legislation to protect agriculture from deer. Definite proposals for legislation are now under consideration.

The Committee on Co-operative Marketing, appointed by Mr. Adamson, and presided over by Major Sprot, has made important recommendations. The Scottish Application clause of the new Agricultural Marketing Bill provides for speedy legislative approval of these recommendations.

FISHERIES

The fishing industry has been assisted in various ways. The sale of herrings in 1929 rose by 200,000 barrels as compared with the previous year, and higher prices were obtained.

Under the Tory Government export of herrings to Russia fell to 4,000 barrels. Following the restoration of relations between Great Britain and Russia there was an increase to 72,000 barrels.

The total grants made by the last Government to the Scottish fishing industry for harbours, piers, etc., averaged £9,713 per annum.

The total of the grants and loans of the Labour Government in one year for additional equipment was £200,000.

In addition, harbour loan debts have been remitted to the extent of £237,000, and loans amounting to about £20,000 have been made to supplement the East Anglian Disaster Relief Fund.

SOCIAL WELFARE

The greater activity and concern of the Scottish Department for social welfare are indicated by the following:

HOUSING

The Wheatley Act subsidy—reduced by the Conservative Government—was restored to its former amount and continued for three years.

The new Housing Act provides a grant for slum clearance *not* per house, but *per person*. It is so designed as to encourage the provision of larger houses—it is also available for houses to relieve overcrowding. The Department strictly limit the number of two-apartment houses but the Act enables grant to be given for hostels for single persons.

The Act also gives a tenant power to complain to the Department if the local authority fails in its duty. The Department can then act in place of the local authority.

POOR LAW

Limitations placed by the Conservative Government on the scale of Poor Law relief have been abolished. This has resulted in raising the allowances in Glasgow.

The system of offering the Poor House as test for able-bodied men who have been out of work for a long period is cancelled. Now employment is offered or outdoor relief is paid. Relief workers' wages have been raised by 5s. a week.

MILK FOR CHILDREN

What is described as the "largest dietetic experiment in history" was instituted in Lanarkshire. 10,000 children were each provided free with three-quarters of a pint of milk from tuberculin-tested herds daily for four months. The effect on the physique and disease-resisting capacity of the children is being closely studied.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Medical services in the Highlands and Islands have been extended and stabilised, and additional financial assistance has been voted.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

below, or at the
ring,

Printed at the Pelican Press, 2 Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4 (12/30/10)

MSH 24168

OTHER PAMPHLETS

Labour Government's Educatio Policy

Mr. Snowden at the Exchequer

The Menace of Protection

Price 1*d.* each, 1½*d.* post free

Quantity Prices for
above Pamphlets and
for the pamphlet on

"What the Labour Government has Done"

12 copies 9*d.*
50 „ 3*s.*
100 „ 6*s.*

From the
LABOUR PUBLICATIONS DEPT.,
TRANSPORT HOUSE,
SMITH SQUARE, LONDON, S.W.1.

END OF
TITLE